



PLUTARCHUS

WIE YM EYNER SEINEN VEYNDT NUTZ MACHEN KAN

HOW ONE CAN MAKE USE OF ONE'S ENEMY

translation:

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SOURCE

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THE GERMAN COVER

Plutarchus how one
can make use of
one's enemy

Emser

The one / who is oppressed by enemies /
And conforms himself to this booklet /
May the enemy be of use to him often more /
Than friends / with only bare semblance

ARMAHIE RONVMI EMSER

¹

¹ 'The badge of Hieronymus Emser'.

PREFACE BY THE TRANSLATOR

Plutarchus, ca. 46 - ca. 120 A.D., was a historian and philosopher, and influential politician and diplomat.

The original title of the treatise reads: 'De capienda ex inimicis utilitate'. This Leitmotiv will have been motivated by a statement by Xenophon (will be dealt with in the text).

Plutarchus will no doubt be motivated to this work on the basis of his experiences in many important political circles. From everything it appears that he was a wise and prudent man, who gave loving advice, and in his missions to the rulers abroad will no doubt have greatly served the affairs of his country.

Plutarchus was translated into the German language by Jeronymus Emser, 1477-1527, theologist, and secretary of the Duke of Saksen. He fought Luther who - on the occasion of the badge displayed above - called him the Bock-Emser.

The German translation strongly deviates from the original text. It must therefore be considered a free expression of it, rather than a verbatim translation.

The German language shows the same phenomena as so many works from that era. The grammar is flawed. The verb forms in a predicate are often partly missing. Some sentences advance seamless into a next one, without a concluding point and a new capital. Also clauses often begin as a completely new sentence with a conjunction. One and the same word is sometimes written in more than one manner. The sentence structure is defective.

- - -

In the context of Plutarchus' standpoint the next fable is instructive:

“When Hercules was adopted amongst the gods, he firstly paid his respect to Iuno. The entire Olympus was amazed, and the remark was made towards him that it was his enemy to whom he offered this special attention. ‘Nonetheless’, Hercules answered, ‘only her prosecutions produced the achievements through which I earned a place amongst you’. The heavenly company approved of the answer of the new god, and Iuno was placated.”²

Ruud Muschter

² Gotthold Lessing, 1729-1781. Fabeln, Zweites Buch, 2. Hercules, 1759.

PREFACE BY THE GERMAN TRANSLATOR

To the stringent and very truthful Georg³ von Wedebach⁴, the country's superintendant and captain in Leipzig, Jeronymus Emser offers his diligent, willing service. Stringent, truthful and very generous lord and master: Plutarchus, the librarian of the emperor Trajanus, has initially written this booklet - how one can make use of one's enemy. Erasmus of Rotterdam quite recently has made Latin from the Greek letters. There is no doubt that both these very learned men have sought in it nothing but - the one being a Greek, and the other one a Latinist - usefulness, honour and assistance. And because I am no less inclined to the prospering and the advancement of the general German nation, and also no less obliged than Plutarchus to the Greeks, or Erasmus to the Latinists (although those differ from each other), I have tried my utmost to change into our native phrasing the mentioned booklet for all Germans who are eager to read something alien or new, to their use and assistance⁵. For you and your honourable, virtuous housewife written in memory of, and thankfulness for many received beneficences and friendship; kindly requesting you to accept it from me as gratitude, for you will find me both willing and indebted to please you both appropriately. This is given on the wednesday after Nicolas, Anno Domini 1519.

³ "Gorigen".

⁴ In 'The Statesman in Plutarch's Works: The Statesman in Plutarch's Greek and Roman Lives: Proceedings of the Sixth International Conference of the International Plutarch Society (2002)', Nimeguen/C (Mnemosyne Supplements), April 2004, there is talk of 'Georg von Wedenbach'.

⁵ "frommen".

THE TEXT

Plutarchus to Cornelius⁶

I presume, Cornelius, that you have intended a rather soft way of governing, through which you firstly wisely and well have in mind the general benefit of your citizens in this matter, and that you express yourself benign towards those who in the affairs that relate to them appear before you, and do not fall too hard on them. However it has the appearance, that one would sooner find a country in which no harmful or poisonous animal resides (as one says about the island of Crete), than a community that is not saturated with envy and where no struggle is found, commonly followed by wrath and enmities springing up. And even if this is not the case, as now and then even friends among each other confuse us, so that from their side we get folks on our backs and have to arrive at enmity. Which the most wise man Chilo⁷ brings to answering him, who praises himself that he has no enemy, that in that case he neither will have friends.⁸ Therefore in my opinion it firstly well befits a reasonable man to whom a ruling or force is commanded, that among other things he takes care that he also heeds his enemy well and attends to him well, as Xenophontis⁹ speaks, where he says, that a bright, mindful man can make good use of his enemies. Hence that I, of all that has come to my mind when disputing about

⁶ Presumably it concerns Publius Cornelius Scipio, 236-183 B.C., Roman general and statesman. Defeated Hannibal in the 2nd Punic War. Carthage was destroyed during the Punic wars, which unfolded between 264-164 B.C.

⁷ Very probably Chilo of Sparta, ca. 6th century B.C., one of the Seven Wise of Greece.

⁸ “kein frundt nit habẽ”. The German language gives here a double negation; not uncommon in these old texts.

⁹ Read: ‘Xenophon’, Greek historian and warrior, ca. 430-354 B.C.

this matter, have made an anthology, and have written to you in the following manner.

Our ancestors fought with the wild animals for no other reason, then keeping themselves safe and unharmed from them, and were very satisfied with that. But those who came after them, have found methods to not only remain save from the mentioned wild animals, but also to benefit from them and use them. They took the meat for food; and wool for clothing; milk and intestines for medicine for several kinds of ailments; and the skin and the hide for protecting and arming the body. So where these animals were absent, man often had to live an animal life himself, and go half naked and bare. Now, as of those some are also found who, repleted with this, do not want to harm their enemy, and Xenophon says - as has been stated above -, that those who are mindful also draw benefit and assistance from their enemies, we may not well rebuke such a highly famous teacher, or take it that he has written suchs without reason. On the contrary we must look at the matter nearer, and as we - all of our lives - can hardly be without an enemy, also learn to seek this benefit on his side. A gardener is not capable of making a certain wild tree, nor a hunter all wild animals tame and noble¹⁰. Nonetheless they have thought out methods how to apply them differently. The sea is bitter and not well potable. It carries fishes and ships however, and if somebody wants to be on it, it has to carry people, goods and chattels back and forth. A satyr (this is an animal like a human being, except that it goes on all fours and goes about in the wild forests) once saw a fire, and wanted to embrace and kiss it. Thereupon Prometheus¹¹ spoke: "Listen, you goat, I do not advice you to do so, because the bold has been prohibited to you. It is not meant for that. It is there to shine and give heat,

¹⁰ "geschlacht".

¹¹ Greek deity. Stole the fire from the Olympic gods and gave it to the humans, for which he was heavily punished.

and is for all arts and crafts an instrument, for whom who knows how to use it.” Thus we all must try well if we can grasp an enemy (as by nature he is detrimental and cannot be reached easily) at something, or can find something on him that flourishes for our own good. Because there are quiet some annoying and dismal things, especially those that happen to one, from which one nonetheless can draw benefit and assistance. For instance those who are burdened with illness or are needy, need to work the less. And they who have to work hard, the longer keep their health. Thus, what has brought many to the school and high arts, other than having been driven from home or having lost their goods, like Crates¹² and Diogenes¹³. Zeno¹⁴ as well, who - when he was told that his ship had perished and all his goods were lost - spoke: “Happiness does justice, and only wants to bring me forcefully to the philosophy and the school.”¹⁵ So there is no matter so evil, or one can obtain something good from it, if one knows how to seek it. But just as animals, who have a good, strong stomach, are all healthy, even when eating snakes or scorpions, and some have such a fiery nature that they also digest stones and shards, thus there are also those who are so ill and weak that they can hardly endure wine and bread. Thus the fools cannot well endure the friends. Those however who are mindful and wise, do not only manage to keep their friends, but also the enemies in such a way, that they have pleasure and assistance from them. Therefore one should first and foremost, which is the hardest, heed an enemy, which seems to me the most beneficial, come to think of it. This is to say, that your enemy watches day and night, and diligently observes what you commence, to somewhere find a reason to bring you

¹² Crates of Thebes, cynical philosopher, ca. 365 - ca. 285 B.C. Out of compassion with the poor he is said to have given away his fortune.

¹³ Diogenes of Sinope, cynical philosopher, ca. 405-323 B.C. Voluntarily living as a beggar..

¹⁴ Zeno of Elea, ca. 490 - ca. 430 B.C., Greek philosopher.

¹⁵ The citation will end here.

in disrepute and belittle you. This is why he well heeds all your doings, and not only you, but also all your friends, servants and those with whom you deal, whom he penetrates through the sharpness of his eyes (even if you hide from him behind rocks or trees), like Linceus¹⁶, to perceive through someone what your trade and intention¹⁷ is. Such a near and diligent oversight friends do not have over us, because we are often ill or die even before they notice it or come to us. So our enemy can hardly sleep before us, because he wants to know what our plans are, and often experiences how we are doing and how we behave at home with wife and children, and how much we owe, before we ourselves do. Because just like the vultures and ravens only go straight to the dirt, and attack it¹⁸, rather than the fresh meat, thus he also hates the other one, and pays much more attention to that person's disgrace than to his virtue or good work. Now, is this not a remarkable benefit and ditto assistance of your enemy, that through his dangerous oversight he brings you to having your life in good order, and not doing or saying anything that can be traced back to you, just like a sick person must beware of unhealthy food, which vigil and care dim many bad thoughts in us? For in any case it befits to have the wish and intention to live with diligence and carefulness. Because just like the states that adjoin the enemy - and daily have to be on the alert or have the weapons ready - are much more careful as to a good arrangement and regulations: those who always shun¹⁹ their enemy, and thanks to them must be brave²⁰ in their intentions²¹, tacitly through that come in the habituation of a

¹⁶ In Greek mythology king of Argos, and literally the 'lynx-eyed one'.

¹⁷ "anschleg".

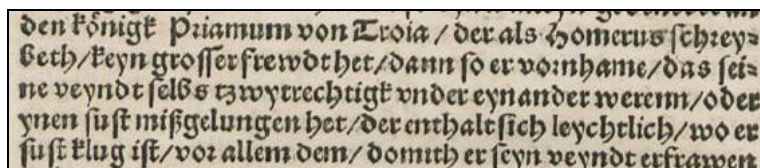
¹⁸ "wittern".

¹⁹ "schawhen", furtheron also in another meaning.

²⁰ "from".

²¹ "an yren danck". 'Danck' has several meanings, among which 'thought', 'will', 'intention'. Translation uncertain.

good life, that from then on keeps accompanying them. So if one only thinks of the king Priamus of Troy, who - as Homerus writes²² - knew no greater joy than when he grasped that his enemies were inconsistent amongst themselves, or failed in something else, one easily comprehends what the other things are in which he is mindful, especially regarding that with which



den Königt Priamum von Troia / der als Homerus schrey-
 Beth / Eyn grosser frewdt het / dann so er voinhame / das sei-
 ne veyndt selbs tzyrechtigt vnder eynander werem / oder
 ynen iust misgelungen het / der enthalt sich leycheleich / wo er
 iust klug ist / vor allem dem / demuth er seyn veyndt erfrawen

which he can do his enemy a pleasure, and it is good to think of it often. Because also the singers or the lute pluckers take little notice, when they sit alone, of how they sing or pluck. But when one listens to them, or others are coming who can also do it, they firstly arrange their sheets, tune their instruments, and need all their diligence not to be despised. So everybody who knows that he has envious ones who target him, should arrange his entire life all the more diligent, and is all the more careful in his affairs, for alas it comes to it, that we are more ashamed before our enemies than before our friends, and for the sake of the enemy (in order that one does not mock us) do or leave something much sooner than in honour or for the pleasure of our friends. When the Romans had obliterated the big city of Carthage and with that had also subjugated Greece, some thought that they were now safe for the entire world. But Scipio²³ says, that only now it looks very bad for us, and that we have to watch our steps more than previously, as we have no enemy, nor someone for whom we have to be scared or startled.

²² In the 'Iliad'.

²³ The question is now, whether this is the same person who is addressed with 'Cornelius' in the onset of this argumentation: Publius Cornelius Scipio.

Somebody asked Diogenes how he wanted to revenge himself on his enemies, and in the most frustrated tone he answered him: “The more reasonable and honourable you behave, the more you meet with your enemy”, and that is a very courteous and mindful answer, that should be taken note of very well.²⁴ Some sigh when they see that their enemy has a good horse, or a nice fertile garden or field. How much more sad do you think, that your enemy looks upon you when you express yourself and act as a reasonable and wise man, pious²⁵ and virtuous, mindful with words, straightforward in acting, moderate with eating and drinking, and using in all things your intelligence, that always advises and instills in us the best. Pindarus²⁶ says, that those who are conquered, have an imprisoned or bound tongue, which mainly affects²⁷ those who are surpassed by their enemies as to virtue, diligence, kindness and welfare, because those things stop the mouth of the enemy, bind his tongue, so that, even if he would like to, he can tell nothing bad about us. However, if you wish to tear up your enemy and inflict great harm upon him, then do not insult or wound him with words, and do not call him a malicious liar, adulterous one, drunkard, or a scanty dog, or something similar, et cetera, but just aim at being a man, and behaving reasonable and truthful, sober, mild, moderate and friendly against everyone, and ever look²⁸ into your breast beforehand and question your own heart whether this same slander with which you want to chastise somebody, does not also adhere to you one or more times, in order that you do not encounter your enemy again, or somebody addresses you as has

²⁴ In the margin it says: “Merck dĳ mit vleys”, same intention.

²⁵ “from”. The work uses this term in several meanings.

²⁶ Pindaros, ca. 522 - ca. 443 B.C., Greek poet.

²⁷ “belāget”. Has several meanings, among which ‘indicting’, ‘calling to account’, ‘making responsible’. Translation uncertain.

²⁸ “schawe”. Here therefore in the meaning of ‘scrutinizing’; earlier in the text ‘eschewing’. In the Dutch language respectively ‘schouwen’ and ‘schuwen’; there it is etymologically related.

been written in the Tragedies: ‘This one wants to heal other folks, and he himself is full of shortages²⁹ and tumours’.³⁰ For there is no more shameful or worse case, than that the one wants to mock the other one in the affairs with which he himself is tainted. And just like the reflection of the sun more damages the eyes, thus those invectives are much more caustic and bitter which firstly have gone out from somebody and next are again scrolled back with the truth. Because just like the clouds after the wind attract Cecias³¹, thus the vice and a bad life are followed by mockery and shame. Now, if the enemy says to you that you are a fool³² or an impostor, then exert yourself the more in studying and being sober. Does he call you indolent and lazy, then be the more audacious and hardworking. And in whatever he rebukes you regarding that of which you think you are guilty, improve it. Although it would be better if you had done it yourself upfront, like Plato, who anytime when he saw something with a person that he disliked, always went inside and questioned his consciousness if he also had that phenomenon in himself. So if somebody, if he wants to scorn people, would think upfront, and when he attributes such a criticism also to himself, would upfront expell it and thus would better his life, then he would have no little benefit of upbraiding, which after all in itself is something temerarious and useless. If now some will laugh when one person calls the other bold, who himself has not a hair on his head, how then must one not mock him who rebukes someone else for having a vice³³, and is burdened himself with another one that is much

²⁹ “eissen”.

³⁰ In the margin stands the following text: “Clausula que hic desiderat [unreadable] decorū germanicus paulo infra re [unreadable] signifianti[s]”. The last letter resembles a ‘9’.

³¹ Kaikias, Greek deity of the northeastern wind. Scattered hail.

³² “kunstloßer”.

³³ “laster”.

severe? When it happened to Leo of Byzantium³⁴ that somebody mocked him for having bad eyes, whereas that person himself did have a hump, he answered him³⁵: “That with which you confront me, is human, but you bear mockery and invectives on your back. Those are created by the devil.”³⁶ Therefore we must beware of wanting to correct somebody at some point, in order that we are not disturbed by disdain. When Alcmeons³⁷ spoke to Adrasto³⁸ that his wife had killed her former husband, he answered: “But you have strangled your own mother.” The Roman Domitius³⁹ speaks pestiferous to Crassus, if he did not weep when the lamprey⁴⁰ that he has raised for so long a time, had died. But Crassus answered him seriously and perceptively, if he had not wept as well, when he had carried his three dead women to the grave.⁴¹ Hence that

³⁴ It is not clear who of the many Leos it has been.

³⁵ At the height of this passage there is in the margin, partly with, partly without hyphens: “Nemesin [unreadable] malo demone germanis trāstuli. Siqdem demoma sūt omnes dij dee [unreadable] gentiū”. Partly it says, that all gods of the lords are demons. A passage that can be found in the Bible, Psalms 95:5.

³⁶ There exists a somewhat deviating translation, i.e. in ‘The Complete Works of Plutarch’, Delphi Classics, 2013, version 1, chapter ‘How to profit by one’s enemies’, 5 1: “Leo of Byzantium for instance, insulted by a hunchback because of the weakness of his eyes, said: ‘You rebuke me for that which can befall any man, whereas you on your back bear the mark of Gods wrath!’”

³⁷ Greek son of a god. His mother had let herself be bribed to incite him to wage war against Thebes. Presumably because he later on discovered this treachery, Alcmeon murdered his mother on his return.

³⁸ King of Argos.

³⁹ It concerns Gnaeus Domitius Ahenobarbus, Roman senator, 98-48 B.C., during a discussion in the Senate.

⁴⁰ Jawless predatory fish.

⁴¹ Here as well there are more versions valid about the event. “Have you not”, Crassus again said to him, “buried three wives without ever shedding a tear?” Plutarchus, ‘On the Intelligence of Animals’, 976a[46]. And with Aelianus (Several Histories, VII, 4) and

everyone should investigate well - if he wants to mock the other one or wants to affront people - if again he has not something that can be criticised as well. For the saying ‘nosce reipsum’⁴², which means as much as: ‘know thyself’, or, as we say it: ‘turn away then’⁴³, is not said to anybody more, than to such mockingbirds (who could give everybody a hard time), in order that they abstain from this and - in case they feel like mocking people - do not have to again reluctantly hear their own shortages. Thus we see which result may follow us when we want to mock somebody. But no less it brings us assistance, when we ourselves are rebuked by someone else, regardless he being friend or enemy. For like Antisthenes⁴⁴ says, for a genuine warning and maintainance of the good life that he has molded, everybody needs before all things either a very good friend, or a fierce enemy, of which the one out of love, the other one out of wrath, tells the truth that he likes or dislikes⁴⁵, and he must now how to accomodate to it. And this is certainly what a good friend ought to do to the other person, out of love. However, since in our days the flattery and the caressing have so much taken the upper hand, that a friend no longer wants to punish the other one or tell him the truth, we have to hear it from our

Macrobius (Saturnalia, III.15.3) we find: “When Domitius some day in the Senate corrected him [Crassus; RM] for having shed tears about the death of this fish, in an attempt with this to make a fool out of him, Crassus answered: ‘Thus I have done about the death of my fish, as you about the death of neither your first, nor second wife.’”

⁴² ‘know the reality’.

⁴³ “kher vor deyner thuer”. German saying: ‘Ein jeder kehrt vor seiner Tür, es sind’t wohl Kot genug dafür.

⁴⁴ Greek philosopher, pupil of Socrates, ca. 445 - ca. 365 B.C. He also said: “Watch your enemies, because they are the first who discover your mistakes.”

⁴⁵ Saint Augustinus said in this regard: “Just as friends with flatteries put us on the wrong path, thus enemies often put us on the right path with sharp words.” Confessions, VIII, 18.

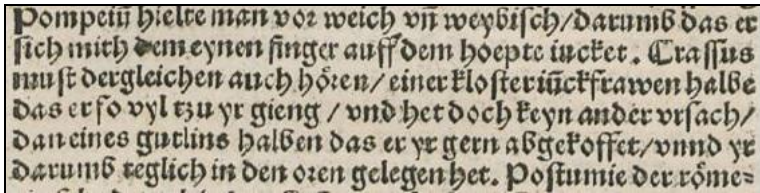
enemies, just like Telephus⁴⁶, when he did not find a physician among his friends, and had to have himself be cured by his enemy. Because in these cases one should not observe the mindset of the enemy, but the deed and the benefit that comes to us from it. Because just like the one who wanted to cut Prometheus' throat only hit and opened his larynx, so that he was safeguarded from it and furthermore remained unharmed, thus also the invectives that are sometimes apportioned to us out of great envy and hate, often serve us to great happiness and expell some of our vices that before we had not noticed, nor had perceived with ourselves. However there are enough who do not think of this, when they assault somebody with words. From the onset however, they want to tell him again what he is up to, in order that the injuries and slander (like the dust on them who are wrestling with each other in the sand) do not decrease, but increase more, and the one by the other is all the more tainted and violated. Now, would it not be better, if they did as someone to whom a hole or impairment in his clothing is showed; that they at once would mend that, and repaired what they were reprimanded for; whether they did or did not recognized their guilt, and irregardles whether it has any truth to it and somebody even knows himself to be free and innocent of such added invectives. Nonetheless he must consider how he had come to face this suspicion and mistrust, and whether he ever gave reason to it with words or activities. Because Lacydes⁴⁷ said, that the king of the Argiuen⁴⁸ groomed himself over the top and also had a proud way of moving around, the

⁴⁶ Greek mythological figure, son of Herakles. He got injured through an assassination attempt, which was enacted upon him in bed by his wife on their wedding night.

⁴⁷ This will be Lacydes of Cyrene, Greek philosopher, ca. 240 B.C., son of Alexander.

⁴⁸ Read: 'Argos'.

latter was rebuked for being proud and assuming.⁴⁹ Pompeius was considered to be weak en feminine, because he



Pompeiu hielte man vor weich vn weybisch/darumb das er
sich mit dem eynen finger auff dem hoepte ircket. Crassus
muß dergleichen auch hören/einer klosterinckfrawen halbe
das er so vyl zu yr gieng / vnd het doch keyn ander vrsach/
dan eines guttins halben das er yr gern abgetoffet/vmd yr
darumb teglich in den oren gelegen het. Postumie der rōme=

scratched his hip with one finger. Crassus heard something similar, because of a sister in a convent, on account of going over to her so often. And yet there was nothing more to it, than that he would like her to have a little estate and therefore did not leave her alone⁵⁰ on a daily basis. The Roman Postumia only suffered damage for liking to laugh so much and being flirtatious with the men, and to such an extent, that she not only came to ill repute in public, but also was indicted before the judge and pontiff. And although she was found innocent, one yet reminded her, that when she led an honourable life, she should also be industrious in honourably speaking and acting, and had to stop such cheery conduct. Themistocles⁵¹, although he did not act badly, came under suspicion towards Pansania⁵², as if he was his traitor, because he was friendly towards him and at the same time letters and messengers came and went from him. Therefore, if something comes to your ears which is not at once true, you nonetheless should not despise it immediately, but contemplate if it stems from you yourself, or

⁴⁹ The German sentence does not run well grammatically. Translation uncertain.

⁵⁰ “in den oren gelegen het”.

⁵¹ Greek politician, ca. 524-459 B.C. To eliminate him he was, after his exile from Athens, entangled by the Spartans in a complot of general Pausanias.

⁵² Read: ‘Pausanias’.

your friend, in order that henceforward you can avoid it yourself. Some must become wise by injury and their great detriment. Thus Meropa says in the fable: "Only now that happiness has taken everything away from me, I have become wise." Is it not better to have a teacher at hand, like our enemy is, from whom we have teaching for free and hear what beforehand we did not know about ourselves or had perceived? For the enemy heeds us much more diligently than we ourselves. Thus it also deceives us, that we love ourselves too much, for that love is, as Plato says, blind. But the envious one has sharp eyes and does not let pass anything that he does not accuse. Hieronymus was rebuked by his enemy for having a bad mouth odour. Thereupon Hieronymus complained with his wife that she had not said this to him all along. She answered: "Dear man, I only did assume that all men smell this way." So the enemies always tell us which imperfections adhere to us, long before our friends do, be they externally or internally. From this it seemingly follows, that we can derive no small benefit from our enemy. And with all this it is the great virtue, that somebody knows how to control his tongue and knows how to speak with modesty, intelligence and good reflection. We can achieve this in no other manner, than through great diligence and prolonged training. With that we have to dim the bad notions and movements of our nature, and upfront also the source that is the cause that we ourselves do not know what we say, and (as also Homerus attests) the words tear us with them rashly and fly out. This happens only to those who before have not been diligent, nor have practised in stopping their wrath and other bad cravings, and therefore - neither mastering their nature, nor their mouth - are also so audacious and pretentious in their speaking, that they not only are despised by the world, but also often are punished for it by God. So let us be silent, just like an unsalted meal that does not make one thirsty becomes everybody well, and has gained Socrates great praise. So Hercules as well, who - seen the way how people write about

him - has as much esteem for unuseful speaking and invectives as for flies. This virtue however cannot be learned by us quickly. When our enemy rages and storms very ill-temperedly, then be silent stock-still and let the wrath, just like a ship a foaming rock, pass, which is important at sea and preferable. If we learn this from the enemies and make it our habit, we can also endure it from our friends all the quicker. And then we are not so much burdened or sad when our wife nags, father and mother punish us, or the brother quibbles with us and is embittered. This was also the reason why Socrates met his Greek wife Xantippe so greatly and had himself be called names, in order that he made patience to a habit and also practised it out of doors. Although it is a much greater virtue that somebody condones something with his enemy, and can meet him and has himself not be enraged by him, than that we exert patience towards our friends and do not avenge ourselves on them. We are obliged to do that. He who does not want to avenge himself on his enemy (even if he would like to), and absolves him, must be highly praised. And yet more commendable and to be lauded more is it, when somebody offers comfort, assistance or any support to his enemy in need or when he is invoked by him, and can find it in his heart, which kindness and beneficence surmounts all other virtues. Like when after his death all statues and pillars of Pompeius⁵³ which he had himself erected in commemoration, were torn down, and which his enemy, emperor Julius⁵⁴, had reinstated again. Cicero⁵⁵ said to him: "Emperor, by having reinstated the pillars of your enemy, you have made your stronghold and yourself an eternal memorial."⁵⁶ Because an enemy who has done something reasonable, should not be stripped by us of his honour. And everybody speaks well of us, and holds us for

⁵³ Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus, 106-48 B.C.

⁵⁴ Unclear who this must have been, seen the lifespan of Cicero.

⁵⁵ Roman politician, 106-43 B.C..

⁵⁶ Unclear where the citation ends.

envious the less, when we praise the one (even if he is our enemy) who is very commendable. After that, one does the more believe us, when we criticise somebody, than someone who does not look at the human, but at the virtue or vice, and only criticises or praises that. From that wells up for us even another benefit, that no less should be paid attention to. And that is, that he who thus adjudges his enemy something that God adjudged to himself, and is not envious, can all the more see and endure his friends being well-off, and the one richer, and the other more learned, or being in esteem with the people more than he himself, with at times also among our friends arouses secretive muttering and rejection. Now how could our enemy inform us about something better, than that we learn from him how we adjudge everybody whole-heartedly what God grants him in the form of happiness, without⁵⁷ being envious or sad about that because he is doing well? Through this much vexation is avoided among friends, like distrust, suspecting and discussing⁵⁸ someone, and hampering his honour and happiness. Everything of this that one is not capable of preventing considerably, more and more eats away deeper, just as if in a state one firstly must omit something that is not good (if upfront one cannot cut all things with axes in the onset)⁵⁹, because this almost certainly gets into a habit which afterwards is difficult to erase. Thus the ones who for instance have performed evil practices amongst the enemies, like swindle, unfaithfulness, stratagem and danger, will normally remain tainted by these things, so that their friends as well must be on their guard and have to protect themselves from them. Therefore it is much better that also towards the enemies one refrains oneself from such practices, in order that they do not keep adhering to us. For because of this Pythagoras prohibited to steal the birds, and when at some time he had bought a net full

⁵⁷ The word that comes hereafter is unreadable.

⁵⁸ “verspreche”. Has many meanings. Translation uncertain.

⁵⁹ The metaphor is not clear.

of fish, he let them all swim away again, and did not want to allow any animal be killed, in order that one would not go into the habit of killing human beings the easier, and of murder. It is a great advantage when somebody is used to act straightforwardly and reasonably towards his enemies, because then his friends all the sooner rely on him, and the less they should worry about him. Scaurus⁶⁰ had an issue against Domitius and therefore had summoned him before the court. Before the latter appeared before the court, the servant of Domitius came and wanted to tell Scaurus something secretive about his master, but Scaurus did not want to hear that, but tied him up on arms and legs and forwarded him to his master. Thus Also Cato⁶¹ acted so honourably towards Murena⁶², that also the enemies trusted and believed him. He who believes in his enemy, presumably will not plan against his friends something dangerous or misleading. As however (as one says) every lark is up to a little ostrich or small being, just as every rooster is up to the fight, and, no matter how pious he is, part of the envy adheres to every human and is innate to him, there never was something better⁶³ (like Pindarus says), than that one pours this vice, if one cannot completely exterminate it, out over the enemy yet, and - just like a secret departure - keeps it away far from one's friends, which was very well observed by Onomades⁶⁴, an excellent wise man during governing. Because when on the island of Chio a dissension raged amongst the civilians and he was part of the lot that had the upper hand, he did not want the other party to be totally destroyed, in order that, if they no

⁶⁰ Marcus Aemilius Scaurus, ca. 163-89 B.C., head of the Roman Senate. Appointed voivode by Domitius.

⁶¹ Because the process against Murena took place in 63 B.C., it must concern Cato the Younger: Marcus Porcius Cato Uticensis, 95-46 B.C., Roman politician.

⁶² Read: Lucius Licinius Murena, Roman consul.

⁶³ The German language uses here a double negation also.

⁶⁴ Statesman.

longer had an enemy, they⁶⁵ themselves would not start to argue amongst each other and become envious. For if we use up⁶⁶ these vices against the enemy, the less damaging they are for our friends. It also should not be the case, that the one potter hates the other one, like Hesiodos⁶⁷ says, nor that the one neighbour prosecutes the other one, or that a good friend does not adjudge the other one that he is happy. But if we do not ever clean this conduct in another manner or cannot detach ourselves from it, we should rather pour our anger over the enemies. Because just like the experienced gardeners are accustomed to sow onions and garlick amongst the roses and violins - in order that what the roses have too much of odour, draws into them and ennoble them, and we thus skim off this mess of the envy on the enemy - the more we remain pure and pristine towards the friends. Yet we can then struggle without vice with our friends to gain art, honour and commodities, but insofar that it does not grieve us and does not make us envious when they surpass us. On the contrary, let us diligently examine among them with what virtue and merit they come to this, and also adopt this ourselves, being vigil, sober and careful in all things. When Themistocles, after Meltiades had gained a very great victory on the field of Marathon, could not sleep, he constantly mused about how also to achieve such an honour and price. However, if someone has such a deflated and wicked nature, that he at once becomes envious and sed when somebody else surpasses him as to intelligence, as to power, honour or wealth and this other person is much more adequate with providing counsel and speaking than he himself, and the latter does not raise himself from this and is not diligently trying to obtain such a reputation for himself as well, that one is a true envious

⁶⁵ Read: the winning party.

⁶⁶ “vorgerent”. Possibly ‘digesting’ is meant, in the sense that the vice must be used up before it can be applied. Translation uncertain.

⁶⁷ Greek poet, ca. 8th century B.C. It will concern a citation from the ‘Erga’ (‘Works’).

person, not having so much grace, that he might notice the things that made his enemy ascend to such an extent. However, he who does not let himself be blinded so entirely through envy, but with equal eyes and without hate observes the conduct and morals, words and works of his enemy, can easily take in that that person's happiness and well-being are not predestined, but come forth from great diligence, virtue and reasonableness. With such a diligence, care and effort he must lie ahead as well, if he wants to be somebody ahead of somebody else. When we see however that some ascend and become powerful not through virtue, but through deception, flattering, or gift and present, then it should all the less grieve us. We should rather enjoy our innocence and piety; because all the gold in the world is, as Plato says, incomparable with piety and innocence. We also must constantly think about the word of Solon⁶⁸, when he said, that one should not obstruct virtue and chastity, nor for richness, nor for the favour of the nation, nor for the sake of any temporary power or honour. For nothing is nice or should be praised that has been gained with shame or lewd affairs. Although everybody has a high opinion of himself - whereas he nonetheless loves himself too much -, this love is blind and causes that we always rather see what does not befit our enemy than ourselves. We however ought not to be joyful when our enemy is faring badly, or when he has acted wrongly in something. Also again not to diminish his happiness or reasonable actions. On the contrary we must be diligent on both roads to temper our wrong conduct, and follow him in virtue and honour in such a way, that we are not found to be lesser or more insignificant than him.

⁶⁸ Greek politician, ca. 638 - ca. 558 B.C.

Candidorū erit ignoscere si maiestatē orationis duorū Illustrium virorū Plutarchi et Erasini assequi ubiq⁶⁹ non potuimus difficile.n. est Herculi clauam eripere.

⁶⁹ Unreadable. Not clear what the passage is referring to. In any case it seems to be about forgiving the great treatises of both famous men Plutarchus and Erasinus, and that Hercules brings salvage.